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Press Release

“Woods Left 2010 Masters without His 5th Green Jacket”

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Riviera Beach (USA), April 12, 2010: Eldrick “Tiger” Woods didn’t win “The Masters” (green jacket, \$1,350,000.00) for the fifth time. On Monday, Woods stepped in front of the public for the first time at Augusta National looking like a radically different man in his return to golf. He looked nervous about re-appearing in the wake of his marital woes, uncomfortable in his attempt to connect with a public he’s practically stiff-armed in the past. The certainty of purpose he always carried himself with was missing in that first practice round. Watching him, you couldn’t help wondering: Who is this guy?



In his news conference Monday, his first since the scandal broke, he was humble and contrite and more open than anyone has ever seen him. He spoke about showing more respect for the game and about toning down his emotional outbursts, both the exuberance and the anger. On Wednesday, Woods endured being publicly chastised by Augusta National chairman Billy Payne in a State of the Masters address. “He forgot in the process to remember that with fame and fortune come responsibility, not invisibility,” Payne said of Woods. “It is not simply the degree of his conduct that is so egregious here; it is the fact that he disappointed all of us, and more importantly, our kids and our grand kids. Our hero did not live up to the expectations of the role model we saw for our children.”

For a guy who so rigorously guards his privacy, the intensifying scrutiny must be grating as he makes his way back from the public disgrace of his sex scandal. This, after all, is a guy who hated the excessive analysis of his golf swing. Imagine what the probing analysis of his character, integrity and very soul must be doing to him. The compelling question Woods’ return to tournament golf raised at the Masters this week wasn’t over how he’ll meet new challenges inside the ropes. It is how he’ll meet the new challenges between his ears. It’s how he’ll keep the relentless new scrutiny from penetrating the fortress of personal space he so fiercely guards. It’s whether his desire and motivation will wane with the assault. The scrutiny on matters beyond Woods’ game continued in Saturday’s third round when an angry Woods let loose a profanity on national TV after a wayward shot. There was another later in the round. It made an issue of Woods’ pledge to show more respect for the game.

After tying for 4th behind winner Phil Mickelson (16-under 272, the lowest by a Masters Champion since Tiger Woods in 2001) in his return to golf Sunday at the Masters, he apparently left Augusta National leaving no clue where his next stop will be on or off the Tour. It is reported that about the time Phil Mickelson was hugging his wife, Amy, in the fading light on yesterday, Sunday evening, and celebrating a third career Masters victory at Augusta National, Tiger Woods was being whisked away down Magnolia Lane in the back seat of a gray Chevy SUV, hat off, head down and future uncertain. A lot of questions remain unanswered about Woods, including when he will play next. In an interview, Woods was less than definitive, saying only that he was going to “take a little time off and kind of re-evaluate things.” After 144 days away from the game and seven days in the public’s eye at the Masters, he must feel “born again.”

Will we see him at Quail Hollow? The Players Championship? The Memorial? Or is he going to limit himself to major championships in his newly crafted competitive life? Is it possible we might not see him again until the U.S. Open at Pebble Beach, CA? And when we do see him again, who are we going to get? The humbled champ who at week’s start seemed so eager to redeem himself and win back the respect and affection of golf? Or the frustrated champ who at week’s end seemed annoyed when questioned on TV about how the changes he’s making to his temperament might adversely affect his game?

Phil Mickelson’s victory at the Masters Tournament was due in part to his domination of the par-5 13th hole. Mickelson had two eagles and two birdies on the 13th hole. In the last 20 years at the Masters, seven golfers have played a single hole at Augusta National at a combined 6 under for the tournament, but Mickelson is the only player to do it twice. He was 6 under on the same 13th hole in 1995. Phil’s wife and mother, both diagnosed with cancer, greeted him with tears at the 18th green.

Lee Westwood finished 2nd (275 - \$810,000.00), Anthony Kim – 3rd (276 - \$510,000.00) and K.J. Choi – tied at 4th (277 - \$330,000.00). Matteo Manassero (Verona, Italy) was the “Low Amateur Winner.” He was the youngest (16) ever to play at the Masters’ while finishing 4 over, beating three major champions, among others. He will turn professional for the May 6 – 9, 2010 BMW Italian Open at Turin’s Royal Park Golf and Country Club.

In the end, the “new” Tiger looked a lot like the old Tiger. He was welcomed with open arms at Augusta National, where all most anyone cared about was his game. He left it without a Green Jacket for the fifth straight year.

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